

# High achievers recognised at the Australian Cotton Industry Awards

**T**HE excellence and achievements of the Australian cotton industry over the past year were recognised at the 2019 Australian Cotton Industry Awards in association with the Cotton Collective at Griffith in July.

Tom and Charm Arnott from Boggabilla received the Bayer Grower of the Year award, recognising their efficient and effective farm management practices at their properties 'Fairfield' and 'Tambalaka'.

Australian Food and Fibre's Moree farm manager, Murray Connor, was recognised for his commitment to innovation and passion for the cotton industry by receiving the Adama Chris Lehmann Trust Young Cotton Achiever of the Year award.

One Tree Agriculture farm managers Jamie Trill and Ashley

Tunks, of Warra in Queensland, were awarded the AgriRisk High Achiever of the Year award for their excellence and innovation in the cotton industry.

The Cotton Seed Distributors Ltd Researcher of the Year award was presented to Dr Linda Smith from the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries for her work studying cotton pathology.

The IPF Service to Industry award was presented to one of



Mark Dawson (Bayer) left with Charm and Tom Arnott.



From the left: Ashley Tunks, James Trill and John van der Vegt (AgriRisk).



Murray Connor.



James Quinn (CSD) and Dr Linda Smith.



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Troy Cosh (IPF) and Kieran O'Keefe.

the industry's longest serving regionally-based cotton extension officers, Kieran O'Keefe.

Cotton Australia CEO Adam Kay congratulated the finalists and award recipients on their achievements.

"The finalists for the 2019 Australian Cotton Industry Awards are all outstanding role models and advocates for our world-leading industry and are congratulated for their contributions to Australian cotton," Adam said.

"Particular congratulations must go to the recipients of the Awards. Our industry is incredibly proud of their achievements, and we applaud them for the work they do in keeping Australian cotton at the cutting-edge of agriculture."

Adam said the 2019 Australian Cotton Industry Awards had shone a light on the sector's resilience during what had been a tough season.

"Despite this terrible drought, the Australian cotton industry has made significant gains across all areas, particularly around our sustainability targets and efficiency measures," Adam said.

"Our growers continue to produce the best and highest-yielding cotton in the world, and are supported by leading scientists and researchers right across the supply chain.

"One of the strengths of our industry is our commitment to achieving excellence; with that in mind, I look forward to seeing what our Awards recipients and finalists achieve next," Adam said.



2019 Australian Cotton Industry Award finalists.

## TOM AND CHARM ARNOTT – BAYER COTTON GROWER OF THE YEAR 2019

Tom and Charm Arnott have been awarded the prestigious Bayer Cotton Grower of the Year Award for 2019. The Arnotts, who farm at 'Fairfield' and 'Tambalaka' at Boggabilla, were awarded the title at the annual Australian Cotton Industry Awards dinner held in Griffith in July.



Tom and Charm Arnott.

Bayer Sales Lead, Mark Dawson, congratulated Tom and Charm and all other finalists on their steadfast commitment to water conservation, environmental responsibility, industry peers and local communities.

"On behalf of all of us at Bayer I would like to congratulate Tom and Charm along with the other finalists. It's no secret that our industry is facing significant headwinds because of the ongoing drought but it has been inspiring to see how cotton industry leaders have responded. The award nominees are a true reflection of the resilience of the cotton industry and provide leadership to our next generation of cotton growers."

Mark highlighted the value of these awards as a means of recognising the critical role that Australia's leading cotton farmers play in the industry.

"This awards program has always been important to us. I am proud of not only the winner of the award this evening, but all previous winners and finalists, who represent the excellence and dedication of Australia's cotton farmers."

The Arnotts began farming at Fairfield in 2002 and purchased a second property Tambalaka in 2016. Since then, the Arnotts have implemented a five-year plan and strict 50/50 crop rotation schedule that incorporates wheat, barley and chickpeas.

They put their success down to a continual focus on improvement across every aspect of their farming operations. Their implementation of a range of technologies, including a telemetry weather system, moisture probes and storage gauges, has made the management of their water use more efficient, enhancing their ability to nurture the land and increase profitability.

The results speak for themselves with their cotton harvest averaging an estimated yield of 12.7 bales per hectare.

Accepting the award Tom said, "it's a great honour to be here and congratulations to the other finalists. We are proud to accept this award and would also like to extend thanks to our operations team. Their commitment and attention to detail is exceptional.

"Thank you to Bayer for the ongoing contribution made to cotton research and development and thank you to all of the Goondiwindi businesses that unfailingly support us", said Charm.

"Bayer's sponsorship of this award is part of our investment in the future of the Australian cotton industry and the individuals who make it so successful. We look forward to continuing our commitment to the industry over the coming years," said Mark.